

SENATOR WITEK: Lieutenant Governor, members of the body, my amendment removes Section 14 from the welfare reform bill. I know that...Senator Wesely, I don't think anybody is sitting on their hands on this issue, I mean from the committee amendments that if they are adopted to the welfare reform bill will be part of the bill. It removes Section 14 on page 5 of the committee amendments. Senator Wesely, I don't think anybody is sitting on their hands on this issue. You're not sitting on your hands. You fought legislation and Senator Day has, Senator Beutler has, Senator Dierks has. We've discussed it in detail. In the Insurance Committee, there's talk about having an interim study done on it. We discussed it last year to some extent on the welfare reform bill. We've discussed it on a lot of different bills that have come either to the floor or within the Health Committee or the Insurance Committee. It's an issue that we are dealing with. We're in the process of talking about it, of changing any changes that need to be made, of discussing it. That process should be allowed to work without inserting in this...this language into this committee amendment stating that the Governor should develop a plan to accomplish this goal. It's not a permissive. It's telling us...telling him that he should...to do this. And it will cost some money. Government never does anything without costing money. Developing a plan will take staff time. It will take...it will take a lot of different people involved in developing a plan, it could be very complicated. It's what we're doing here. We're involving people in it. It's costing money to do here in the Legislature. So it's not something that will be without cost. I think it's something that is worthy of discussion. We are discussing it. We are...we're trying to work it into whatever eventually comes out of the Health Insurance (sic) Committee on these issues. But putting it into the welfare reform bill, to me, in putting it into such specific policy language, saying it is the intent of the Legislature that by a certain date, July 1, 1999, health insurance should be available to all citizens of Nebraska, we already have health insurance available to all citizens of Nebraska, so you're inferring that we don't, if you put this language in. We already have health insurance available to all citizens. We're telling the Governor to put a plan together. We're telling him what has to be in the plan. We're telling him to give us a report here at the Legislature. We are duplicating...we are demanding that he duplicates exactly what we're trying to accomplish here and what we're spending, staff time, our time, floor time, on discussing here in the